CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [redacted] 25X1

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR (Latvia) 25X1 [redacted]

DATE DISTR. 18 Oct 1950

SUBJECT Conversion of Railroad Gauges

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NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

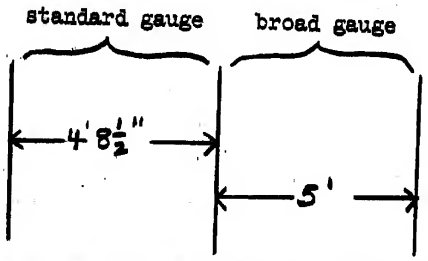
DATE ACQUIRED BY SOURCE 25X1 [redacted]

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

DATE OF INFORMATION 25X1

[redacted]

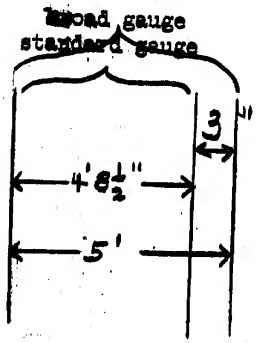
I



1. This system would be very impractical for the following four reasons:

(a) Double ties would be needed, a needless additional expense
(b) Almost all European railroads have inclined rails slanting inwards on a ratio of 1:20. If the center rail were perpendicular to the ties it would require special plates and also make it impossible to attain high speeds.
(c) Bridges and culverts would have to be widened, a very expensive undertaking, especially in Latvia where there are so many streams and rivers.
(d) Special switches would have to be manufactured.

II



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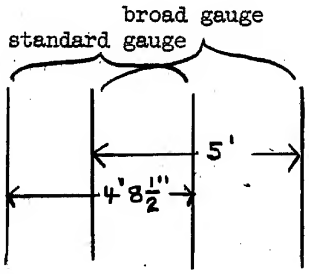
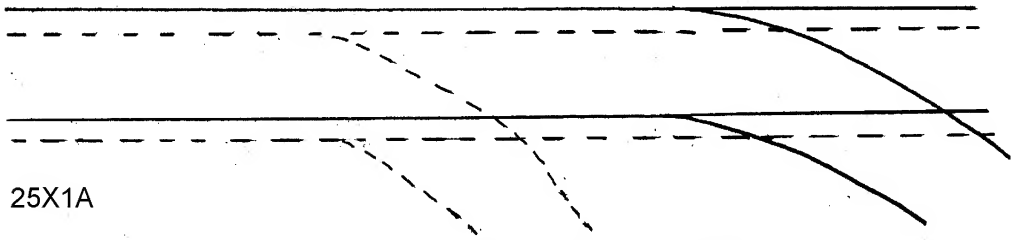
2. A more practical arrangement than I above, but still very difficult as special switches are needed. In 1937 in the Riga main station several sections of this type track were laid. They were considered practical only for sidings and marshalling yards. A $3\frac{1}{2}$" distance between rails is not impractical. The wide gauge of 1524 mm can be safely used with a tolerance of 8 mm, 5mm greater and 3 mm less.

III



3. This arrangement is practical and was frequently used throughout Latvia. It does not require additional ties or a widened roadbed and most Latvian bridges are wide enough to permit passage of the four rails. This arrangement was extensively used in the Riga, Jelgava, Liepaja and Daugavpils stations, and was also used by the Germans during 1941-44 for longer lines. Regular switches can be used as follows:



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4. [redacted] if the Soviets use any system of rail conversion, they will use the system outlined above (III). This rail arrangement has been tested and proved practical in Estonia and Lithuania as well as in Latvia.

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